

prefer to do them alone. I've had one enlightening experience, shopping with you, you know."

"So you have." He laughed at the remembrance. "Yet I thought I was pretty meek, that day. Well, so you don't mind getting to the mile-stone?"

"Not a bit."

They were beside it now. Burns stopped the car. It was a country road, although it was the main highway between two large cities, and on this April afternoon it was deserted by motorists. Only in the distance could be discerned anything in the nature of a vehicle, and that was headed the other way.

"I suppose I'm a sentimental chap," he observed. "But in one way I've been rather dreading getting home, for your sake. It's come over me, since we turned our faces this way, that not a thing has been done to make my shabby old place fit for you — except to clean it thoroughly. Cynthia's seen to that. Does it seem as if I hadn't cared to give you a fit welcome home?"

His eyes were a little troubled, as they searched hers. But they grew light again as they read in her serene glance that she did not misunderstand him.

"Red," said she — and her hand slipped into his — "I like best to come into your house, just as it is. Take me in — that's all I ask — and trust